60TH CONGRESS, 1st Session. | SENATE. | REPORT No. 660.

MEMORIAL TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON SITE OF LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE, IN KENTUCKY.

MAY 15, 1908.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WETMORE, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 7110.]

The Committee on the Library, to whom was referred the bill (S. 7110) to aid in building a memorial to Abraham Lincoln on the site of the Lincoln birthplace, in Kentucky, have had the same under consideration and report it back without amendment.

The bill is as follows:

A BILL To aid in building a memorial to Abraham Lincoln on the site of the Lincoln birthplace, in Kentucky.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the expenditure of the sum of fifty thousand dollars is hereby authorized, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of War, for the express purpose, and no other, of aiding in the building of a suitable memorial upon the farm, in the State of Kentucky, upon which Abraham Lincoln was born, said memorial to be in process of construction February twelfth, nineteen hundred and nine, the centennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth: *Provided, however*, That this authorization of expenditure is made upon the express condition that the Lincoln Farm Association of the State of New York shall first have raised the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, used, or to be used, for the purchase of said farm, building said memorial, caring for the same, and acquiring relics characteristic of the life of the period and locality in which Lincoln was born.

In reporting a similar bill on May 12, 1908 (H. Rep. 1641, 60th Cong., 1st sess.), the Committee on the Library of the House says:

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to aid in the building of a suitable memorial on the farm in the State of Kentucky upon which Abraham Lincoln was born.

We are now but nine months from the centennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

By private enterprise and Government appropriation much has been done to honor the memory of both Columbus and Washington, but until now, comparatively little has been done to honor the memory of Abraham Lincoln, who is the third great name in the history of our country, and who lived that this Government of the people, by the people, and for the people might not perish from the earth.

Two years ago a group of American citizens organized and incorporated under the laws of the State of New York a society known as the Lincoln Farm Association,

which has for its purpose the preservation as a national shrine the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln.

At the inception of this society, through the generosity of one of its directors, full title to the Lincoln birthplace farm and to the rude little cabin in which he was born was acquired. These two deeds in hand, the association began preparations for an appropriate national celebration on the centennial of Lincoln's birth.

This association, under the direction of its board of trustees, opened offices and headquarters at 74 Broadway, in the city of New York, and have earnestly invited the people of this country to cooperate with them in building a worthy memorial to be built on Lincoln's birthplace farm and dedicated to the American people on the centennial of his birth.

The plans of this memorial provide for the construction, on his birthplace farm, of a permanent memorial which will have as its central object of interest the preservation of the weather-worn log cabin in which Lincoln was born, and such other relics as will tell the story to coming generations of the heroic pioneer life out of which he came.

Through monthly and weekly magazines and periodicals, as well as newspapers, announcement was made to the people of the purpose of this association, and called upon them to support this work. Through voluntary subscription as a result of this announcement there has been enrolled on the records of this association in the past two years upwards of 80,000 members, whose contributions have aggregated a total cash asset to date of more than $100,000. Contributions from the public are still being received, and the membership in this association is constantly growing, and it is the hope of the directors that with the help of the Congressional appropriation of $50,000, which is recommended, the association will be able to complete this memorial in time to be dedicated on the centennial of Lincoln's birth.

In view of the laudable purpose of the association, the large amount contributed by so many American citizens, and because in the judgment of the committee the memorial contemplated is worthy of national support, the committee favors the expenditure by the Government of the sum of $50,000 in aiding in the erection of a suitable memorial upon the Lincoln farm.

This birthplace farm of 110 acres, in the geographical center of Kentucky, 50 miles south of Louisville, on the Illinois Central Railroad and near to the main line of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, will be closer to the center of population of the United States than any other national park now existing. It will become the nation's commons, the patriotic mecca of North and South, East and West, the national school of peace and unity, where all sectional animosity will forever be buried, and, as has been said, the memorial will stand as a temple of patriotic righteousness.

We believe American youths have too long turned longing eyes toward the holy places of Europe, visiting the birthplace of Robert Burns and Schiller, the tomb of Walter Scott, of Napoleon, and of Victor Hugo, while we have neglected to inspire them with the holy places at home.

In the life of Abraham Lincoln we have a story that the history of all Europe can not match, and the first and humble home of this great and tender figure should take its place in the affections of our people with Washington's beautiful Mount Vernon and the battlefield of Bunker Hill.

We believe it wise and worthy that the nation should appropriate something to such a national shrine as this, which expresses our unity, our common love for our common patriot, and our faith in our nation's peace.

No part of the money to be appropriated is to become available until the Lincoln Farm Association has first raised the sum of $150,000, to be used for the purchase of the farm, the erection of the memorial, caring for the same, and acquiring relics characteristic of the life of the period and locality in which Lincoln was born.

The officers of the association are Joseph W. Folk, president; Richard Lloyd Jones, secretary, and Clarence H. Mackay, treasurer, and includes in its board of directors such men as Joseph H. Choate, Horace Porter, Cardinal Gibbons, Oscar S. Straus, William Jennings Bryan, and Albert Shaw.

The President and Secretary of War are heartily in favor of the bill.

O